

State Bar of California, Office of Governmental Affairs

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LEGISLATURE RETURNS

The Legislature returned on Monday (April 1) after taking its annual spring break. Policy committees met this week and heard numerous bills – primarily “fiscal bills” that must be passed by these committees to the same-house Appropriations Committee on or before the April 26 deadline. Fiscal bills are those measures that contain an appropriation of funds, require a state agency to spend money for any purpose, or which the Legislative Counsel Bureau determines will result in a substantial (historically more than \$25,000) loss of revenue to the state. (See the Chief Clerk’s “[Glossary of Legislative Terms](#)”).

Next week will be another busy week for policy committees. Due to the large number of fiscal bills that have not been heard, some committees are already requesting a special hearing in April - in addition to their regularly scheduled April meetings. The special hearings are necessary in order to hear all fiscal bills before the above deadline.

LEGISLATIVE COMMENTS VIA EMAIL

For individuals who wish to comment upon legislation, the state Assembly is taking steps to make the process as easy as possible. On the [Assembly home page](#) is a link called “[How to Comment on Bills](#),” which first brings up a bill search form and then, once the bill is found, provides another link to a comment form. The comment form, once filled out and submitted, sends an email expressing your support, opposition, or comments to the bill’s author.

Clearly, as one can see from the form, special consideration is given to email

messages coming from constituents of the author.

The State Senate does not offer a similar automated service. To send an email comment to the author of a Senate bill, one needs to first identify the bill in question (at any of the various [legislative search sites](#)), then direct an email message to the bill’s author. The email addresses for Senators that have them (most – but not all) is:

senator.lastname@sen.ca.gov

Whether or not a comment on a bill submitted via email is as effective as one sent via regular mail frankly depends upon the legislator to whom it is addressed; some members and staff are more comfortable with and receptive to email communications than others. For those who wish or need to deliver their comments via regular mail, addresses can be found on the [Assembly Roster](#) maintained by the Chief Clerk of the Assembly, or the [Senate Roster](#) at the Senate web site.

Note: Comments on legislation should always be cc’d to the legislative policy committee considering the bill.

ENRON PROBLEM CONCERNS POLICYMAKERS

Enron Corporation and the problems it has caused its employees and shareholders is having a very negative impact on various policymakers in the Capitol and in certain state agencies. In addition to legislation involving energy and long-term energy contracts between the state and energy companies, legislation pertaining to corporations and their employees and/or shareholders is being carefully looked at by those persons who make decisions and policy here in Sacramento.